

REMARKS

By the above amendments, Claim 1 has been cancelled and rewritten as new Claim 21 to more clearly set forth the presently claimed invention. The above amendments should raise no new matter issues and are believed to put the subject application in better condition for allowance. Entry of the new claims is therefore proper and is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Specifically, the Examiner has objected to the recitation of "a means of disconnection command." While Applicant respectfully disagrees with this position, Claim 21 has been rewritten without the recitation of "means of disconnection command." Claim 21 recites a "blocking command comprising one optical photo coupler for each one of the cells not corresponding to the chosen user station to control blocking of electronic connection of user stations other than the chosen station to the common source of voltage." Support for the "blocking command" now recited in Claim 21 can be found throughout the Specification, particularly on Pages 7 and 8. It is respectfully submitted that the specification is clear in using the terms "disconnecting" and "blocking" interchangeably. However, in order to expedite prosecution of the subject application, Applicant has replaced the phrase "control automatically electronic disconnection," with the phrases "automatic blocking command" and "control blocking of electronic connection." It is respectfully submitted that the Specification and Drawings provide ample description to enable the connection

"blocking command" now recited in Claims 21. Claim 21 is therefore believed to be free of the rejection under section 112 set forth in the Official Action.

In the Official Action, Claims 1-9, 12-17, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Coker (US Patent No. 5,444,772). Claims 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Coker. Claim 18 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Coker in view of Frailey (US Patent No. 4,281,220). These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

As set forth in the present claims, the invention is directed to an electronic switching system for connecting electronically a common source of voltage (U_e) to a chosen user station selected from a plurality of user stations connected in parallel. The system includes a number of cells equal to the number of user stations, each cell corresponding to one user station. Each cell comprises electronic means of connection to connect the corresponding user station to the common source of voltage. Each cell also comprises a means of automatic blocking command comprising one optical photo coupler for each one of the cells not corresponding to the chosen user station to control blocking of electronic connection of user stations other than the chosen station to the common source of voltage. Upon connection of the chosen user station to the common source of voltage, flow of current through photodiodes in the cell corresponding to the chosen station saturates corresponding phototransistors located in cells not corresponding to the chosen user station which in turn block ballast transistors located in cells not corresponding to the chosen user station. The system of the

invention therefore allows blocking of the connection of user stations other than the chosen station to the common voltage source.

As illustrated in the Specification, a system according to the invention includes a plurality of identical cells, one cell for each user station. The cells are inter-commanded photo-electrically through photo transistors such that the cell corresponding to the chosen station commands the blocking of all the other cells in the system thereby insuring the blocking of connection between the user stations other than the chosen station and the common voltage source. As illustrated in the specification "it is certain that, when the user station with switch 10 is connected to the source U_e , the two other user stations with switches 12 and 14 are disconnected from this same source...[T]he terminals of the two phototransistors of cell 60 are connected respectively to points B1 and M1 of the first cell, and to points B3 and M3 of cell 62. For example, if the user of the station with switch 12 stays connected, the switching transistors of the two other cells will be blocked, owing to the fact that their base is connected to their ground (B1 is connected to M1 and B3 is connected to M3)."

In other words the connecting on the line of the first user station implicate flowing of current in the associated cell of this connected user station. In each cell there are Photo diodes of Photo couplers (their number is equal to the number of the remaining cells (user stations) to be commanded) which will be saturated. This saturated Photo diodes saturate the corresponding phototransistors, which are, located each one in the remaining cells to be commanded. Each saturated photo transistors of each remaining cell to be

commanded will block the corresponding ballast transistor and consequently will block the remaining user stations from connecting to the source of voltage. The use of photo couplers maintains the separation of the ground for each cell and insures unilateral command of the cells by the cell associated with the chosen user station without reaction from the other cells.

Coker does not suggest much less anticipate the presently claimed invention. Coker does not suggest a system whereby a cell corresponding to a chosen user station commands the blocking of cells corresponding to stations other than the chosen station thereby blocking the connection of those stations to a common voltage source.

Coker appears to disclose a system with cells which are not commanded by the cell associated with a chosen station. Rather, the system disclosed in Coker appears to be based on the voltage available to the cells. When the common line is available (free) all cells associated with the user stations have a voltage of 48 Volts and each station can be connected to the line and become the chosen station. When one station is connected to the common source, the voltage of the line and in the cells associated with the other stations falls to between 6 and 8 Volts. All cells in the system disclosed by Coker have a Zener Diode (20) of 12 Volts. When the voltage in the cells other than the cell corresponding to the chosen station falls to a value of between 6 and 8 volts, the Zener Diode will block the connection of that cell to the common source. This is different from the claimed invention.

Thus, Coker does not teach or suggest the presently claimed invention and the 102 and 103 rejections based on Coker should be withdrawn.

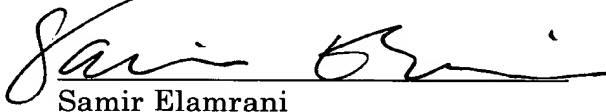
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #100718.54209US).

Respectfully submitted,

April 30, 2004


Samir Elamrani
Registration No. 43,601

CROWELL & MORING LLP
Intellectual Property Group
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844